

Message Text

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12

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 SS-15 NSC-05 /050 W

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FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3605

INFO USDOC WASHDC

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT BAGHDAD

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DEPT PASS FAA FOR INFO

BEIRUT FOR RCAA AND FAA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, KU

SUBJ: KUWAIT REACTION TO US REJECTION OF BILATERAL CIVIL
CONSULTATIONS.

REF: STATE 175069

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, MAHMOOD MIRZA, DIRECTOR OF
PLANNING, KUWAIT AIRWAYS CORP. (KAC), EXPRESSED HIS VIEWS ON
GOK REQUEST FOR BILATERAL DIRECT AIR CONNECTIONS BETWEEN KUWAIT
AND EAST COAST USA CITIES, AND ON USG RESPONSE (REFTEL). HE
NOTED THAT NORMALLY TWO STEPS WERE REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH
SUCH SERVICE: DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GOK AND USG ON
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A BILATERAL AIR AGREEMENT, AND NEGOTIATION OF AN OPERATING

AGREEMENT WITH THE CIVIL AVIATION BOARD (CAB). MIRZA FELT THAT, FOR IMMEDIATE FUTURE, GOK WAS PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN NEGOTIATING FORMER, GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT, AGREEMENT, NOT NECESSARILY LATER. HE EXPLAINED THAT REASON FOR THE GOK REQUEST WAS A DESIRE FOR PLANNING FLEXIBILITY. ONCE RELATIVELY SLOW PROCESS OF DIPLOMATIC NEGOTIATION WAS COMPLETE, MIRZA SAID, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE WHEN KAC DETERMINED THAT DIRECT US-KUWAIT AIR SERVICE WOULD BE FEASIBLE AND PROFITABLE, TO PROCEED MORE QUICKLY TO THE NEGOTIATION OF CAB APPROVAL.

2. MIRZA ALSO REACTED TO IDEA CONTAINED IN REFTTEL FOR MULTI-LATERAL CONSULTATIONS IN CONJUNCTIONS WITH OTHER GULF STATES. HE DOUBTED THAT THE OTHER STATES INVOLVED WOULD BE WILLING TO FOREGO BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS. HE SUGGESTED THAT IF SAUDI ARABIA, FOR EXAMPLE, SOUGHT TO ESTABLISH DIRECT AIR SERVICE WITH THE UNITED STATES, BASING ITS DECISION ON THE NEED FOR SUCH SERVICE IN LIGHT OF ITS ECONOMIC EXPANSION PLANS WHICH CILMAR IN SCOPE BUT VASTER IN SCALE TO THOSE OF KUWAIT, THEN IT MOST PROBABLY WOULD SEEK BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US ITSELF. MIRZA SAID THAT THE PROPOSAL AMOUNTED TO A REQUEST TO WAIT UNTIL A JOINT GULF AIRLINE WAS ESTABLISHED, SOMETHING HE FELT WAS STILL IN THE DISCUSSION STAGE AND THUS WAS A LONG WAY OFF (SEE SEPTTEL ON KUWAIT AIRWAYS DEVELOPEMENTS).

3. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST, ALBEIT UNOFFICIAL, REACTION HERE TO USG RESPONSE IN REFTTEL. EMBASSY NOTES THAT INCREASED PARTICIPATION BY US COMPANIES AND THEIR PERSONNEL IN KUWAIT'S ECONOMIC EXPANSION MAKES THE MATTER OF DIRECT US GULF AIR CONNECTION, WHETHER ON A BILATERAL OR A MULTILATERAL BASIS, A MATTER OF SOME IMPORTANCE AND WE DISAPPOINTED WE HAD NO OPPORTUNITY COMMENT ON SUBSTANCE USG RESPONSE TO GOK REQUEST BEFORE IT WAS OFFICIALLY COMMUNICATED TO KUWAITIS.

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